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MAY 8TH, 1854.

LIEUT.-COL. LARCOM, F.R.S., VICE-PRESIDENT,
in the Chair.

PARKE NEVILLE, ESQ., was elected a Member of the Academy.

Rev. Dr. Todd read the following Paper, by the Rev. J. G. Cumming, on the inscribed stones in the Isle of Man, of which casts have been purchased for the Museum:—

“The Danes and Norwegians occupied the Isle of Man from the beginning of the tenth to the latter part of the thirteenth century.

“Some of the most interesting memorials which they have left behind them are about thirty different Runic monuments, the best of which are included in the present series, of which the dates range from the beginning of the eleventh to the end of the twelfth century. From the close connexion at that time existing between the Scandinavians in Ireland and those in Man, we may naturally expect to meet with some general resemblance between the Manx and Irish crosses. Yet the Manx Runic cross-makers appear to have largely exercised their own fertile genius in the delineation of those now under consideration. This is to be noticed more particularly in the conversion of the cable-work, or Runic knot, as it has been called, into interlacing figures of dragons, or some monstrous scale-covered animals. There is also some resemblance between the Manx crosses and those found in the Scottish Lowlands, and Eastern Scottish Highlands.

“The crosses and tombstones in Iona are most likely later than these, and may in part have been borrowed from them. Considering the very close connexion between Iona and Man, they forming parts of the same bishopric, from A. D. 1100 to

A.D. 1380, and being nearly the whole time under the same or closely connected sovereigns, and several kings of Man (Scandinavians) being buried at Iona, it does appear singular that there should not be a single cross, with a Scandinavian Runic inscription, in this latter island. But neither in England nor Scotland are found Runic stones with Scandinavian inscriptions, so that these Manx crosses appear unique for Great Britain. The inscriptions on the Manx crosses are all in Runic characters, and in the ancient Scandinavian or Icelandic language. There is a peculiarity, however, in the Manx runes. The symbol which in ordinary Runic writings stands for 'o' in the Manx represents 'b,' and the Manx have a symbol of their own for 'o.' The Manx have no symbol for 'h' or 'y.' It is interesting to note that this fact holds good even in the inscription on cross No. 4, where, excepting in the instances of 'b' and 'o,' the runes agree with the ordinary Runic writings, and differ from the *older* Manx. We may, perhaps, get a key to this variation by observing that all the names in the inscription on No. 4 are *Gælic*, and not, as on the other stones, *Scandinavian*.

“ No. 1.—This cross stands in the centre of the churchyard of Braddan. It is the most elegant and highly finished of any in the island, but has been broken in the middle and otherwise defaced. Its age is probably the end of the twelfth or beginning of the thirteenth century. The ordinary cable-work is here converted into interlacing dragons, or monstrous scale-covered animals. It is sculptured on three sides, the fourth side being occupied by the following Runic inscription, somewhat imperfect in the middle:—‘Thurlabr Neaki risti krus thana aft Fiak sun in bruthur sun Jabrs,’ i. e. Thorlaf Neaki erected this cross to Fiak, the son of his brother, a son of Jabr.

“ No. 2.—This cross stands near the south porch of Braddan church. It is probably of a later date than the last, and in the same style as that at Onchan, No. 11. The monstrous

animals are not unlike some seen on monuments in Iona. It has no Runic inscription.

“No. 3.—This cross, the largest but one on the island, stands in front of the church gate of Kirk Michael. The rich carving presents to us figures of stags, dogs, horses, horsemen, and at the base we have the peculiar scale-covered animals, which have been more fully developed in No. 1.

“The inscription on one side reads from the bottom upwards, as is generally the case :—‘Jualfr sunr Thurulfs eins Rautha risti Krus thana aft Frithu muthur sino,’ i. e. Joalf, son of Thorolf the Red, erected this cross to his mother, Frida.

“No. 4.—This cross stands on the north side of the gate of Kirk Michael. It is of a later date than the former ones. The inscription, which is on the back, is rather doubtful, but seems to be :—‘[raisti krus] thana aft Mal Muru fustra sin M’Tader Dufgals kona is athisi ati.’ It is interesting from its containing Gaelic names. It is also written with runes more approximate to the Anglo-Saxon runes than are the other Manx inscriptions, but retaining the Manx variation in the runes for ‘b’ and ‘o.’

“No. 5.—This cross stands on the wall on the south side of the church gate at Kirk Michael, and appears to be earlier than any of the previous crosses, and contains the name of the maker ‘Gaut,’ or, as he calls himself, ‘Gautr Bjornson,’ on the large Andreas cross, and here states that he made this and all which were then in Man. It is also remarkable as giving the manner in which the name of the island was pronounced by the Norwegians, ‘Maun;’ it also contains the ubiquitous name of Smith. The inscription is—‘Mail Brigdi sunr Athakans smith raisti krus thana fur salu sini sin brukuin Gaut girthi thana auk ala i Maun,’ i. e., Malbrigid, son of Athakan (the) smith, erected this cross for his soul. Gaut made this (cross) and all on Mann.

“No. 6.—This elegant cross stands to the north of Bishop

Wilson's tomb, at Kirk Michael. It is carved on both sides, but has been much injured, and contains no Runic inscription.

"No. 7.—This fragment of a fine cross is also at Kirk Michael, built into the top of the church wall. The inscription, which was written on the back, near one side, has been broken by the masons, to make it fit in the bend of the wall. The only words remaining are, 'krus thana aftir,' this cross to

"No. 8.—This is the fragment of a beautifully carved cross, containing only the inscription—'Grims eins Suarta,' i. e. 'Grims the Swarthy.' It is in Kirk Michael church vestry-room, having been removed from the church wall.

"No. 9.—This cross, which stands in Andreas churchyard, is in a very perfect condition, and bears the following inscription:—'Sandulf ein Suarti raisti krus thana aftir Arin Biaurg kuina *sina*,' i. e. Sandulf the Swarthy erected this cross to his wife Arinbjorg. It is covered with representations of the animals of the chase, and of domestic use, as the deer, boar, horse, cow, goat, swine, dog. At the base is a female figure on horseback, perhaps Arinbjorg.

"No. 10.—A very rude cross at Onchan. The inscriptions are much effaced, but seem to be—' . . . sunr raiste aftir (Iliæ) suia markibter—ukikat asuer athigrnt.' On the other side, at the head of the cross, we have the word—'krus;' and further down 'I su Krist;' and on one side, 'Thurith raist runir Thurith,'—engraved in runes.

"No. 11.—Cross at Kirk Onchan, probably of the same age as No. 6.

"No. 12.—Fragment of cross at St. John's, near the Tynwald Hill, the inscription along the side is—'Ino I rvir raist runar thenr after.' Ino Irvir engraved these runes to, &c.

"No. 13.—Representation of the Passion of our Lord, from the Calf of Man, partly restored. On the left hand of

the cross probably was another figure, with a sponge on a reed.

“No. 14.—A cross partly restored from fragment on the church wall of Kirk Michael. Along the broken edge is the inscription—‘Suak raiste krasthana aft rumur
. . . al.’ . . . Suak erected this cross to Rumun. It is probably of the same age as No. 3.”

Dr. Petrie made some observations on Mr. Cumming’s communication.

The Rev. Dr. Todd read the following letter from J. O. Westwood, Esq., on the importance of making a collection of rubbings of the inscribed stones of Ireland.

“*Hammersmith, 6th April, 1854.*

“MY DEAR SIR,—During my visit to Dublin, last autumn, I was greatly grieved to learn that many of the curious inscribed and carved stones of Clonmacnoise, Glendalough, and other localities, of which descriptions and figures (more or less perfect) had been published, have, within the last few years, been entirely destroyed, without any further record being preserved of them whereby doubts which might arise respecting the correctness of the descriptions or figures might be solved.

“Now, it appears to me that it is one of the especial offices of the Royal Irish Academy to rescue, from absolute or partial oblivion, the class of monuments to which I allude; and I know of no more effectual mode of doing so than to form as complete a collection of rubbings of these stones as possible. Of the Ogham stones, I believe, a complete collection of rubbings has been formed by the Rev. Charles Graves, which, I trust, may ultimately be deposited in the Academy’s collection; but the formation of a series of the inscribed and carved stones is a far more extensive matter, and one which requires a certain amount of organization. It appears to me, that the Society would be acting most beneficially towards this end,—